DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 239 498 FL 014 181

AUTHOR Voght, Geoffrey M., Ed.
TITLE Proceedings of the 1983 EMU Conference on Foreign Languages for Business (Ypsilanti, Michigan, April 7-9, 1983). Part VI: Business German.
INSTITUTION Eastern Michigan Univ., Ypsilanti. Dept. of Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 83p.; For related documents, see FL 014 176-182.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Business Administration Education; *Business Communication; *College Second Language Programs; *Curriculum Development; *German; Higher Education; International Trade Vocabulary; *Languages for Special Purposes; School Business Relationship; Second Language Instruction

ABSTRACT

Four papers presented at the conference on the applications of foreign languages and international studies to business focus on the use of German in international trade and the development of college German curricula for that purpose. The papers include the following: "Adding Business German to the German Curriculum: Obstacles, Strategies, Effects" (Harry Reichelt), "Foreign Languages in International Business Communication" (Patricia R Paulsell), "Everyday Negotiations and Transactions: Business Language through the Back Door" (Charlotte W. Koerner), and "Comparative Management Study in the German Language Class" (Christa W. Britt). (MSE)

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1983 EMU CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR BUSINESS

(April 7-9, 1983)

PART VI: BUSINESS GERMAN

Prepared

and

With an Introduction

by

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

The 1983 Eastern Michigan University Conference on Foreign Languages for Business, held on the EMU campus in Ypsilanti, attracted approximately 300 people from all 50 states of the USA and several foreign countries. There were over 70 presentations by speakers coming from 35 states and several foreign countries. This gathering was, to my knowledge, the first time that so many foreign language educators and other interested individuals had met to exchange ideas and experiences related to language and cultural studies applied to business. It was our primary effort, as members of the Department of Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies at EMU, to reach out to the profession, sharing our expertise and facilitating the dissemination of information nationwide on this new direction in foreign language and international education. We are proud to be a part of what we believe is both a significant educational revitalization and a development crucially important to our nation's future.

The papers in this volume are varied and unequal in length and quality. They do share, however, one vital thing in common: they represent the attempt of professionals to come to grips with the problems of creating a new academic specialization and of integrating these innovations into the time-honored traditional curriculum in foreign languages at our institutions of higher education, which have focused almost exclusively in the past on languages and literatures. Much thinking remains to be done, but one thing seems fairly clear now: the struggle between the new and the old will be resolved very differently

at different institutions, depending on the mission of each school. Some colleges and universities will not develop any courses in this new area of specialization, while at others the traditional literature and advanced linguistics courses will be sacrificed entirely in favor of language studies applied to business and the professions. Between these two extremes will lie a full panorama of different proportions in the integration of the new and the traditional. In this diversity among our educational institutions there lies great strength. It is my opinion that there is a great need for both types of language studies. I see a great need for institutions specializing in the traditional areas of academic scholarship as well as for those focusing on the new applications for language and cultural expertise.

Personally I do not acknowledge any necessary incompatibility between traditional literary investigation, for example, and the study of the language of business and commercial practices in foreign cultures. Both of these concentrations seem to be complementary aspects of a larger whole, the interest in the diverse cultures and peoples which make up this increasingly small world. Both specializations can serve to increase intercultural understanding, sensitivity and cooperation. Both can help us live more peacefully with our world neighbors, in our increasingly complex and interdependent global economy.

I am very grateful to the National Institute of Education (U.S. Department of Education) for maintaining the Educational Resources Information Center. My special thanks to Dr. John Clark, Director of

Foreign Languages at the Center of Applied Linguistics, and to John Brosseau, Acquisitions Coordinator for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, for helping make it possible for the papers from this conference to be available to a broader audience.

To all who read these words, may you find something of interest and value in these pages.

Geoffrey M. Vogt
January 12, 1984

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1983 EMU

CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR BUSINESS

(April 7-9, 1983)

PART VI: BUSINESS GERMAN 672

50. "Adding Business German to the German Curriculum: Obstacles, Strategies, Effects," by Dr. Harry Reichelt (Indiana University) 673

51. "Foreign Languages in International Business Communication," by Dr. Patricia R. Paulsell (Michigan State University) 686

52. "Everyday Negotiations and Transactions: Business Language Through the Back Door," by Dr. Charlotte W. Koerner (Cleveland State University) 718

53. "Comparative Management Study in the German Language Class," by Dr. Christa W. Britt (American Graduate School of International Management) 735

ADDING BUSINESS GERMAN TO THE GERMAN CURRICULUM: OBSTACLES, STRATEGIES, EFFECTS

by

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The 1970s and early 80s have been difficult times for American college and university foreign language departments. With most core curricula abandoning foreign languages, or at best having only a first-year course requirement, enrollments in the foreign languages in general, but perhaps in German most of all shrank substantially. With faculty positions thus jeopardized, program offerings were reevaluated. Justification for program existence necessitated at least that kind of soul searching. Just as frequently, students themselves prompted faculties in German to reexamine their curricula. More and more, questions arose asking: "What can I do with a major in German"? "What kind of career opportunities do I have with an undergraduate degree in German"? Traditional answers of the past no longer could satisfy confused and often justifiably anxious students. Teaching or graduate school, the "natural" directions for the German graduate were either overcrowded workplaces or became prolongations before the same questions had to be asked again. I am not at all suggesting that teaching or graduate school are undesirable career or professional choices for today's graduates. In realistic terms, however, they must be viewed as only some among a number of choices. The need for qualified pre-college level teachers remains as critical as ever, as does a cadre of sophisticated and dedicated young professionals at the post-secondary levels. Yet there are those students who do not fall into either of these categories and who want to and should pursue a study of German. What can we provide for them?

At our institution, Indiana University-Indianapolis, the attempt to help students interested in German (but not wanting to teach or go to graduate school) to be competitive after graduation, to give them a chance at being "marketable" was largely responsible for instituting two courses in Business German and proposing a third, an internship. Before curricular changes could be instituted, however, practical as well as philosophical obstacles had to be overcome.

Details about them may be helpful to other undergraduate German departments contemplating curricular additions of business German courses.

Our department is one of approximately a dozen others in a School of Liberal Arts, which in turn is one among numerous other schools, such as Science, Dentistry, Medicine, Law, SPEA, and Business. With this broad based structure the fear of curricular encroachment can easily surface. While this may not be a problem at some other universities, the assertion that you are stepping on someone else's curricular turf will undoubtedly be made if you stray from your "predestined" humanities offerings. On the surface there appears to be some legitimacy to those concerns. Should not career or professional development-type courses be left to the divisions so designated to teach them? Is it not almost presumptuous for the humanist to teach "practical" courses? After all, and that this is what one's colleagues will assert, students learn German so that they can progress to an appreciation of literature! The colleagues have gone that route themselves, German programs are to follow the dictum in perpetuum. In the meantime, upper division courses in literature struggle to avoid cancellation due to low enrollments. Administrators bent on appeasing FTE-conscious legislators or trustees demand minimum enrollment statistics be met before a class can be taught. Faculty members lament that they cannot teach their specialties; students question their advisors why they cannot have "relevant" courses. The curricular juggling act becomes even more challenging when one's own sense of commitment to academe is confronted by the Realpolitik of one's institution: student head-count frequently influences decisions on permitting low-enrolled courses to be taught. It is then not merely a set of practical obstacles that must be overcome but as importantly, philosophical considerations will just as readily determine the direction of curricular innovations.

Is the German curriculum to become service oriented, serving other

disciplines and schools, or is it to maintain its own academic integrity? How do the traditional language, culture, literature, and topics courses adapt to yet another and possibly "foreign" subject? Similarly, how does this "outside" discipline, the business German offering, mesh with the core? These questions and concerns can be answered if the emphasis is placed on humanizing what could be potentially a service-professional course or series of courses. If one believes in the principles of liberal arts education -- and we all have our own notions of them -- such as that it promotes critical thinking, broadens understanding, and engenders acceptance of diverse challenges, then the field of business German takes on a less threatening air, indeed, it becomes another area of study wherein the humanist, in our context the Germanist, can well contribute to the understanding of the subject through his or her expertise.

Who should, then, be the instructor for a course or series of courses in business German? What kinds of subjects should be covered in the course? Who are the targeted students? What are the course objectives? The answers to these questions may not be that difficult to find if the foci remain within the framework of the sense and spirit of the humanities.

Ideally, the instructor for the business German courses would have the background in both areas, business and German. In reality, however, it will be one or the other. At the expense of appearing to slight my colleagues in the Schools of Business, I maintain it is preferable to have a Germanist teach the business German courses. Why? The courses cannot be primarily technical and "how-to" courses, but must focus on culture, current developments, and idiomatic language, too. The instructor should be knowledgeable in the technical aspects of business as well as in the specialized language. Most of us in the field of German have earned our terminal degrees following a fairly similar pattern of study. It is safe to state the potential teacher of business German has to

study subjects relating to business German in an untraditional way. While the course content will partially dictate the instructor's own research and learning for the course, there are some readily available and effective means. For example, by regularly reading German dailies, weeklies, and monthlies, be they the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Münchener Merkur, Die Zeit, or more business-specific printed media as Das Handelsblatt, Wirtschaftswoche, perhaps even Manager and Capital magazines, along with their English-language equivalents, the teacher of German can begin to decipher the patchwork constituting the business scene, and get a feel for, maybe even gain insight to the subject. Through those German publications, the instructor confronts a new vocabulary unlike that found in reports or articles typically associated with general readership audiences, and certainly different than the language of the Deutsche Viertel-jahresschrift, Euphorion, or the Weimarer Beiträge. Reading newspapers and magazines alone, however, does not suffice. To get a grasp of the essentials, taking courses in the fields of economics, business administration, marketing, accounting and the like are much more effective. Not every German instructor is willing nor able to devote the time and energy to be a student him- or herself; "retooling" is arduous and expensive! An alternative is to call on the goodwill and assistance of one's colleagues teaching those areas. Combining and synthesizing the materials from one's own background, especially contemporary culture, with that of the new, technical fields represents a legitimate approach to acquiring competence in business German. Colleagues in the business fields can provide the needed help in directing one's study of particular subjects. For example, German labor relations sound like an offbeat, if not dry subject. Yet in order to fully understand the German working environment one cannot simply gloss over the topic. With the assistance from one's colleagues in business, that theme as well as others can become more sharply focused. Ultimately,

however, the German instructor must design the course.

Either through one's own initiative or with the help of colleagues, contacts and personal visits with business associates in Germany, or German-speaking countries further aid to make the oftentimes abstractions garnered through one's independent studies more concrete. It may not be feasible for every future instructor of business German to personally visit German-speaking business people abroad; but it should be possible to contact German business people employed in this country. Almost every state has in its Department of Commerce a Division of International Trade which can provide the business German instructor with the names of foreign companies residing in the area. Occasionally available are also the names of the top executives. These can be reached relatively easily and from then on the "practical" exposure can be translated into classroom material. Of course, I am not proposing that technical know-how is achieved through the foregoing steps. Instead, what is accomplished is a sense of direction, a start-up, from which the course or courses can proceed.

Another aid are Summer seminars of one to three weeks concerning the teaching of business German; these are offered at the University of Cincinnati, Northern Illinois University and at the Carl Duisberg Centren in Cologne, Germany.[1] These seminars will also help to clarify planning business German courses. But the work of actually constructing the course, setting its goals, and implementing it falls on the instructor. The most difficult aspect in the whole procedure, I am convinced, is the selection of the content for the course or courses. Once that is accomplished other considerations tend to coalesce naturally.

One warning at the outset about course content. Unlike all other courses offered in the German curricula, no suitable textbook is available for business German. The instructor has to create one, or something similar. Not being a

business specialist, the instructor should therefore concentrate on language, culture and current developments related to the business world. The language portion can consist of reading materials from German newspapers, journals, and magazines, as well as newsletters and reports; for example, the German-American Chamber of Commerce's weekly letter[2] is useful in a beginning level business German course. No matter what is chosen, the introductory course seems to work best with edited material (vocabulary lists in the margins, as an example), while more advanced classes profit from original texts. The German Government can provide the instructor with a wealth of information, in the form of pamphlets, booklets, surveys, news releases, and promotional literature on countless subjects. They come in varying degrees of language difficulty and classroom adaptability. A number of ministries and offices abroad and in the USA can supply all the printed material an instructor seeks. Das Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft, and das Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Abteilung Informationsdienst are particularly useful; also helpful are the German Information Center in New York, the previously mentioned German-American Chamber of Commerce (located in major US cities), as well as New York, Chicago, and Atlanta based branches of the Commerzbank, Deutsche Bank, and Dresdner Bank. The problem will not be one of insufficient resources, but rather trying to select the most appropriate.[3]

A sampling of some of the subjects covered in my courses may illustrate the point. In my beginning Business German course, where most students enter with four semesters of college-level German, the focus is on everyday business practices and issues, as well as on the acquisition of an active business affiliated vocabulary. The first lecture gives an overview of the German economy since the founding of the Federal Republic. Historical facts, important people, up to current developments in the areas of labor, social benefits, governmental

policies on trade, etc. are presented in this hour-long lecture. In a preceding class a vocabulary sheet for the lecture, with the German words only, is distributed. The students have to furnish the English equivalents if they desire. The purpose is for the students to acquire the language by doing rather than only by reading. The lecture itself is recorded on tape, as are all other lectures, and available in the language laboratory; students can even get copies made for their own home use. If comprehension of the material presented in class seems good, I ask questions on the content immediately following the lectures. With more difficult material, I give the class take-home questions which are then discussed in the following class meetings.

Some other lecture topics include banking and finance, principles of advertising, employer and employee relations, and unions. For every one of the lecture topics I have developed assignments which aim to make the abstract concrete. This may be in the form of students playing roles (such as employer and employee scenes), designing advertising campaigns, including visual and oral materials, to writing German firms in the area requesting interviews in German with a native speaker. For the instructor, this part of the course is the most challenging as it requires resourcefulness and, without recourse to a textbook, the ability to juggle many different assignments and topics almost simultaneously. It is also the most gratifying segment of the course as students' progress can be measured readily. Besides, their ingenuity is also refreshing for the instructor. Students find the work beneficial as they can see its potential practical applications. I do not presume to present topics with the depth and expertise of a specialist. Students can easily have that kind of instruction in their Schools of Business or departments of Economics. What they usually will not receive in those academic units, though, are current German business topics and issues, nor language-specific teaching which the business German

courses do offer.

To facilitate teaching of the language portion some textbooks are on the market, like Bäumchen's Der Kaufmann[4] and Watson and McGuinn's German in the Office.[5] Not the best choices, but they do fill the need to have a book for the course -- students seem lost without one! These texts serve another function: students who might otherwise be slower in the rest of the course, can work at their own pace. I supplement the books' assignments with letter writings to companies in Germany, as well as translations of correspondence, English to German and vice versa, as well as reviews of newspaper and magazine reports. An excellent confidence building device, and it is part of the course requirements, is that each student select a company in Germany and request from it promotional literature about the company, its products, even samples, where appropriate, and annual reports. I provide a list of companies for the beginning class, while the advanced students must locate their own. So far no students have been disappointed by their addressees. Upon receipt of the material, a short oral presentation to the class is made by each student; the ensuing discussions are as often entertaining as they are enlightening.

In all of the exercises I try to stress the human element in business. Comparing American practices and conventions with their German counterparts seems to be an especially effective method. Just as language and literature need a context, so it is with the business courses. The ideal situation would have the courses taught in a total German-speaking environment; practice, however, tells us this is possible only for students spending their academic year abroad. It is thus necessary to utilize class time engaging the students in the language. Grammatical exercises, or methodologies typical of the standard language classes should be kept to a minimum. After all, no other courses in the German curriculum offers the opportunities of the business German classes, so why not

capitalize on their unique strengths?

The success of the business German courses depends not only on the instructor, course content and approaches, but also on the students themselves. Since the courses are not usually required for the major or minor, as they are not in our department, and if the courses fail to attract and hold students, the business German offerings may not survive into subsequent semesters. From my experience, generally two types of students enroll in the courses. Predominant among them are the traditional German majors, who see the offering as a supplement to their regular studies. The "real" -- commercial -- world is rarely studied in other German courses, nevertheless, it represents an indisputable facet of everyday life. Furthermore, for non-teaching graduates the business German courses offer some edge in job-seeking, especially if the major is coupled with another program of study, such as business administration, or economics. Also, high school teachers, including those with the completed Masters degree enroll in the courses; they, too, want to learn about aspects of contemporary German-speaking countries they did not have available during their undergraduate schooling.

The other main group of enrollees are the undergraduate business students and adult, non-degree learners. With the beginning business German course requiring a moderate degree of German proficiency, and the advanced course even more, any non-German majors will have high school and some college German behind them. They are of course highly motivated. These students benefit most from the all-German instruction and emphasis on subjects related to Germany and its neighbors. Undergraduate School of Business courses cannot concentrate on particular geographic areas to the degree of the business German courses. The adult, non-degree students, usually working professionals, appear to enjoy the non-threatening, "applied" language environment unavailable in other German courses.

On the surface, the seemingly incompatible mix of German and business students would appear to lead to problems. On the one hand the class has students relatively proficient in language but unsophisticated in the core subject field; on the other hand, the inverse is true. In fact, the differences add to class dynamics. Pairing students to take advantage of their dissimilar backgrounds and abilities stimulates team work. The need to work cooperatively and to capitalize on given strengths while encouraging new learning seem to come about with little effort and sometimes more naturally in the business German courses than in other types of German classes I have taught. Contributing to the success may come as much from the class make-up as from the objectives the instructor sets.

It is obvious that German firms will not be clamoring for business German enrollees. Students can expect, however, that the combination of business German with another "marketable" major -- international business, economics -- will enhance their candidacies for positions with foreign owned firms in the US. These students can expect to successfully compete with the single major graduates vying for similar positions. An instructor of German should not overlook career aspirations of his students, but to cater to them exclusively would be equally incorrect. Concommitant with the practical considerations must be the "humanizing" emphasis. One must provide students not only with information which serves as the groundwork for knowledge, but also critical awareness to act intelligently in a world with multiple choices. Virtually every endeavor in the business world requires human input and an awareness and sensitivity to others. Business savvy cannot survive on its own. The business German classes should provide that kind of "instruction." The comparative German-American approach facilitates it. Americans can no longer afford attitudes and <u>modi operandi</u> of years past on the international scene. While technical and

procedural matters may change drastically, the "home bases", the cultural environments of America's business allies or competitors tend to remain fairly constant. Understanding those characteristics must be part of the business person's repertoire if he or she is to be successful. From the curricular perspective of an undergraduate German department, the business German offerings can share in the shaping of more sophisticated individuals for the international commerical world.

There are also some practical effects. Students report that by being able to enroll in the business German courses, they were persuaded to either take the requisite beginning German language classes or otherwise continue with more advanced studies. This holds true for incoming freshmen and for previously enrolled university students. Furthermore, once they start with the business German courses they will usually enroll in the department's other courses, too. In other words, the business German courses act as "feeders" for the whole German curriculum. The majority of our majors complete the business German courses, including those pursuing secondary teaching degrees. The students report the courses provide information and impart skills that are indispensible. Knowing how to write a German business letter may not be as exciting as writing about Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus; deciphering a German company's financial statement (a balance sheet, for example) hardly competes with the complexity of Kafkas parables. Yet each field has its validity, each requires training, skill and imagination to understand and contribute to it.

The business German courses fill an academic need. In our department they have become an integral part of the curriculum. When business German courses in general are recognized as potential catalysts to increase the study of German while serving as complements to many traditional German courses, efforts spent on adding business German to the curriculum will, indeed, be repaid with interest.

FOOTNOTES

[1]For information about the seminar given every Summer in Cologne, contact: Carl Duisberg Society, 425 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022; or Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft e.V., Hohenstauffenring 30-32, 5000 Köln 1, Germany.

[2]"Kurzbrief aus USA", German-American Chamber of Commerce, Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103.

[3]A useful guide for addresses and bibliographic references for business German, available through the Goethe House, New York, is: Bibliography for Business German (Atlanta: Goethe Institut, 1981).

[4]Franz Bäumchen, Der Kaufmann, 5th ed. (München: Hueber, 1976).

[5]Hilde W. Watson and S. McGuinn, German in the Office. Deutsch im Büro (London: Longman, 1978).

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

by

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I Introduction

"Business Foreign Language" courses seem to represent one of the fastest growing areas in foreign language curriculum development. Yet the catch phrase "Business Foreign Language" has been used to describe a broad spectrum of college and university courses designed to market foreign language skill as a valuable adjunct for those wishing to pursue careers in international business. Included in this broad spectrum are not only those courses which stress mercantile vocabulary and correspondence translation skills, but also those which are more oriented toward the training of bilingual management personnel. Regardless of the direction chosen for the business foreign language curriculum, one is challenged by the task of proposing a rationale for the existence of such a course which must serve a dual purpose, i.e. to convince both one's colleagues and the students who comprise the market for such a course of the value of pursuing business foreign language.

In this presentation, I would like to address this complex issue of justifying the existence of a business foreign language curriculum by first highlighting the predominance of English as the major international business communication medium. For, it is the superior position of English in the sphere of international business which dictates the type of program which, I feel, will meet with the most success. Secondly, I will discuss the increasing importance of the role of foreign languages in the future success of American international business operations. Finally, I would like to change the focus of the presentation from the more philosophical to the more practical, by discussing how the rationale developed in the first portion of this presentation has affected the concept and composition of the "German in International Business Communication" and "Business German Overseas Internship Program" at

Michigan State University.

II The Role of English and the Increasing Importance of Foreign Languages for International Business

Within the past 30 years Americans have grown accustomed to a growing export business which, until very recently, provided the U.S. with a balance of trade surplus. We have exported, however, not only out products, our capital, our technology and our human resources, but also -- by way of this export trade -- our language and our culture. McDonalds and Ford have become trademarks on the Western European landscape; Pepsi and Caterpillar are to be seen even in the Soviet Union. Indeed, the dollar has been historically so powerful, the demand for U.S. manufactured goods in foreign markets so high, the scope of American overseas investment so broad, that English has become the primary international business language. For native speakers of English this is certainly a fortunate occurrence; we have been able to market our products overseas with great success, using English as our vehicle of communication -- and simply assuming that the strength of our position would lead to an adaptation on the part of our business partners to our language, habits and ways of doing business. Indeed, the strength of our dollar has allowed us the luxury of virtually ignoring the ramifications of foreign languages and cultures on the marketing of our products overseas. The "everyone over there speaks English anyway" mentality has dominated American overseas business dealings since the U.S. become hearvily involved in export trade after the end of World War II. This rather philistine mentality has certainly led to its share of blunders, including several marketing mistakes based upon ignorance of foreign language or culture. The marketing of the Chevrolet "Nova" model

in Spanish-speaking countries where "no va" means "doesn't go", and the advertisement of Colgate's "Cue" toothpaste in France where the title Cue belongs to a well-known pornographic magazine[1] have been used so often as examples of American ignorance in foreign marketing strategy, that they have literally become the stock and trade of business foreign language teachers attempting to defend the place of business foreign language courses to colleagues as well as business students. Familiarity with the literature concerning this subject, however, soon reveals that the same examples of gross incompetence are used repeatedly and that the handful of linguistic or cultural blunders hardly outweighs the tremendous marketing successes of U.S. companies abroad. Indeed, the examples of marketing mistakes have taken on anecdotal character, representing embarrassing moments for U.S. companies which bemused the foreign customers, producing laughs rather than sales, but few far-reaching effects. Nevertheless, the United States has not become a major force in the world economy by making marketing mistakes abroad; in general U.S. business strategy, whether one personally agrees or disagrees with its aims and methods, has been effective in securing a dominant position for the United States in world trade. Of course we are painfully aware of the embarrassment caused by communication breakdowns in cross-cultural settings, but we should be equally cognizant of the fact that such mistakes have been the exception rather than the rule, and that the overall strength of the U.S. economic position has determined the role of English as the primary vehicle of international business communication for both domestic and foreign firms.

If one accepts the predominance of English as an international business language, a predominance which it is likely to keep for the forseeable future, the problem of developing a rationale for the introduction and/or continuation of a business foreign language curriculum becomes somewhat more complicated.

In creating such a rationale, I feel tnat the use of a few examples of cross-cultural marketing blunders as a basis for an argument supporting foreign language study for business purposes serves only to delude foreign language educators themselves. The examples are often not considered as a part of the total picture -- and basic success -- of U.S. business operations abroad; businessmen, however, are very much aware of the total picture, and are therefore, not impressed by such arguments. In the final analysis, the success or failure of a business foreign language program depends more upon convincing future business leaders, i.e. our present business students, of the value of foreign languages in their educational and career goals than upon convincing our colleagues of the value of such a curriculum. It is the enrollment of business and engineering majors, students from outside the traditional German major, which will, in my opinion, best support the business foreign language curriculum. Realistically speaking, I do not feel that the tradtional foreign language major with one or two courses in "business language" would be employable, in most instances, beyond the level of a bi-lingual secretarial position. On the one hand, the relatively scarce market for such positions in the U.S. would simply not support the number of students who could be produced with such a background; on the other hand, college and university courses of study are not training programs for secretaries and we should not put our students in the position of accepting jobs for which most are overqualified.

When language educators discuss the rationale underlying foreign language for business purposes on the college or university level, they often seem most concerned with justifying the curriculum innovation to colleagues, who often want to be reassured that the business course will somehow fit into the traditional curriculum, not become a "dead end", and -- probably the most important consideration -- bolster the faltering enrollment in the department by feeding other courses. Most colleagues view the business language course as, at best,

the teaching of the language as an "ancillary", i.e. subordinate skill, and at worst, a necessary evil which one must abide in order to help increase foreign language enrollment. Thus, business foreign language is most often regarded as a means to an end within the salvation of the language program as a whole, rather than as an end in itself. If regarded purely as a means to an end -- purely in terms of bolstering enrollment and fitting into the traditional literature-oriented degree program for majors -- the business foreign language curriculum is doomed to failure within a few short years. Such a rationale places the student in the position of finding employment with merely a slight modification of the same skills which have proven to be of limited value in an internsely competitive job market where highly specialized technical skills are considered most valuable. I feel that the attempt to fit the business language curriculum into the traditional major merely uses the student to support the curriculum rather than the curriculum being used to properly prepare the student for success in the job market. Today's student, highly aware of the cost of education and the value of certain skills in the job market, will simply not accept the idea that the addition of a course in business language will make a foreign language degree in and of itself more marketable. Those few who might accept such a premise will soon prove to those following them in the program that they are overqualified for the types of jobs, primarily secretarial, which they might be offered. Thus, we may find ourselves faced with a dilemma. On the one hand business foreign language courses may only be tolerated by colleagues as a method of increasing enrollments; on the other hand that rationale should not be used in conjunction with the traditional major -- it simply is not fair to the student. The business foreign language curriculum <u>can</u> be used to increase enrollments but should be directed away from the traditional major and toward business, engineering, computer

science and other more technically oriented fields where the student stands an excellent chance of finding a position which combines language proficiency with other highly competitive major degree skills. The serious business or engineering student who fully appreciates the degree of foreign language skill necessary to compete with his/her foreign peers (and their English language skills) will more than likely declare a double major and spend the, perhaps, extra year on campus that it may take to complete both programs. In this way, the department's enrollment can be increased while simultaneously preparing students for solid career opportunities in international business.

In addressing the question of justifying the business foreign language curriculum thusfar, we have discussed only the internal rationale for such course offerings to colleagues. We must now address a rationale which will bring the business and engineering students into the program. As mentioned earlier, business students simply will not accept an argument based upon a few cross-cultural marketing mistakes. To the vast majority of business people, English remains the primary vehicle for international business communication. How is it possible to convince them, then, that the use of foreign languages for business purposes has begun and will continue to grow in importance in the next decades?

The answer to that question lies primarily in the increasing interdependence of world trade. The one-way pattern of our investment and product-export overseas which produced the dominance of English in international business circles has come to an end. Until quite recently, the American domestic market remained semi-isolated and to a large extent immune to global problems. The export of manufactured goods and investment in foreign markets were considered adjuncts to domestic market business; involvement in international markets was not a necessity for the U.S. economy, but merely a way to increase

total sales and profits. Within the past ten years, however, the U.S. has been drawn inexorably into the world economy, into interdependent markets over which it has less and less control. Economic power has begun to shift worldwide, so that the pattern of domination by the western industrialized nations is being challenged more and more frequently. Many factors have fostered the development of the international interdependent markets in which the United States is now more involved than ever before. Most important among these factors is the upward evaluation of foreign hard currencies and the general decline in the value of the dollar with respect to these currencies within the past fifteen years. Also contributing to the phenomenon, however: the high cost of European labor and low cast of Asian labor relative to our own, the world-wide dependence on the Middle East for oil supplies and the accompanying disastrous effect on the U.S. balance of trade, and the increasing competition from Germany and Japan, two economic superpowers who stand as testimonials to the efficacy of the American business ethnic. The U.S. moulded both Japan and Germany in its own political and economic image after World War II and actually helped these two competitors to achieve their current political and economic influence. Indeed, these developments of the past decade have finally forced the U.S. into an economic position not dissimilar to that of Germany and Japan, from the standpoint of increasing dependency on import/export trade. Equally important in the new position of the U.S. in world trade is its attractiveness as a repository for foreign investment and as a market for foreign goods. Although it would take decades for the U.S. to feel the degree to which Germany, Japan, and, indeed, most nations are dependent upon one another for trade of necessary items, this is the first time that the U.S. has had to deal with any kind of interdependence and it is now producing repercussions which we shall discuss later. Suffice it to point out at this

point that the U.S. has become increasingly dependent on a healthy balance between import and export trade. Without growing strength in the export sector, the U.S. will find it increasingly difficult to pay for what in the long run will have to be an expanding dependence on foreign energy and raw material supplies for an energy-hungry, high technology society.

Wealth will inevitably continue to flow into oil and mineral rich countries in payment for the raw materials necessary to fuel western economies. This has been and will continue to be a major factor in the shift in emphasis in the nature of international trade and investment trends. In search of a stabile repository for business investment of a large market to help increase the export sales necessary to offset the import of raw materials, foreign businesses are turning in ever-larger numbers toward the United States. From Arab sheikhs investing in American banks, to Renault's purchase of controlling stock in American Motors, to Japan's virtual takeover of the U.S. television market, foreign capital and manufactured goods are flowing into the United States at a rate which eclipses the rate of American investment abroad. Indeed during the decade of the seventies U.S. assets abroad declined by an average of 21 billion dollars per year, while foreign assets in the U.S. increased by approximately 25 billion dollars per year.[2] An example of the incredible increase in foreign investment in the U.S. comes from statistics regarding the Federal Republic of Germany; in 1976 Germans increased their investment capital in the U.S. by 48%, and by 1978 German direct investment more than doubled over 1975.[3] The German-American Chamber of Commerce now lists over 400 U.S. companies which are either subsidiaries of German corporations or are independent companies solely owned by Germans. The American business scene is now punctuated by dealings with foreign business representatives. Today, one American in six owes his/her job to foreign trade.[4]

9

As previously discussed, the U.S. has had a long, sustained tradition of success in marketing its products overseas -- American business is accustomed to foreign competition in foreign markets. Americans are not, however, accustomed to foreign acquisition of U.S. companies and properties, the production of foreign goods on U.S. soil, or -- the unkindest cut of all -- extremely successful foreign inroads which have been made recently into American domestic markets. This increasing pressure upon the U.S. economy from the outside has caused a wave of pretectionism and the threat of trade restraints against successful world competitors like Japan. This time, however, because of the interdependence of the U.S. in world markets such protectionistic devices cannot succeed -- they address themselves to the symptoms rather than the causes of the problem. The average American autoworker, for instance, seems eager to blame his current unemployment woes on the import of Japanese cars into the U.S. market, rather than on the inability of U.S. manufacturers to compete effectively in what has now become a world auto market. Import restrictions are unrealistic in the current interdependent world markets and will, in the long run, exacerbate rather than alleviate unemployment problems which are not trade-related, but rather structurally determined in an industry which is no longer simply domestic. The American auto industry must learn to be competitive on a world scale; protectionistic measures only serve to insulate the industry from forces with which it must learn to cope sooner or later. "The grant of protection is being used by domestic industries to raise prices, rather than to compete, leaving import competitiveness unchanged (at higher prices) and industries still in need of further protection. The recent experience with steel is a good example."[5] Ultimately, such manuevering serves neither the interest of the workers nor the national interest. The national interests of the United States lie in expansion of import/export trade. Imported

products are not only necessary to sustain our own economic growth (i.e. in the case of raw materials and oil), but also to maintain our price and technology competitiveness with foreign goods. It should be remembered that "foreign products have been a major factor in precepitating domestic innovation and change".[6] They foster greater efficiency and responsiveness in domestic industries; U.S. auto manufacturers were forced, for instance, by foreign competition to change over to more fuel efficient cars far sooner than they would have, it left to their own devices.

Since our national interest dictates that we keep our domestic market relatively barrier-free, we must learn to deal more effectively in international business on two fronts, i.e. with foreign competition here and abroad. A healthy import market in the U.S. will necessitate an increased dedication on the part of U.S. business to the export of manufactured goods and to capital investment in foreign markets. Recently, the U.S. has had great difficulty maintaining a healthy import/export ratio. The current growth in U.S. imports has not been counterbalanced by growth in exports; indeed, export volume has stagnated. In the future, the U.S. will have to expand exports in order to pay for imports, and U.S. exports will not expand unless the United States strengthens its commitment to exporting. As the American Importers Association recently stressed, "Our best competitive effort must extend to world markets, not just our own."[7] Our best competitive effort simply cannot afford to ride on the shoulders of American arrogance regarding past dominance in world markets and American ignorance of foreign languages and cultures. According to a survey by the Chicago-based executive recruiting firm of Heidrick and Struggles, 70% of the nation's 1000 largest industrial firms expect their international growth to outpace their domestic growth in the next five years.[8] American business recognizes that its future growth is dependent upon success in the

international sphere, success which must come in much larger proportion than ever before to maintain a healthy economy. America simply cannot be content with dwindling or stagnating shares of both its domestic and international markets. Understanding our foreign competition and foreign markets, i.e. understanding other peoples, cultures, and languages, will be the key to survival for American industries in the decades ahead. We must study the competition, discover its strengths and weaknesses -- and, very simply, offer a better product.

Strategies for studying and dealing with competition are certainly not new to American businesses, but developing methodologies for dealing with foreign competition, for understanding foreign business acumen and mentality, both in overseas and domestic markets, is a dimension of increasing and vital importance for business leaders of the future. In the past the dominance of American technology and innovation, which continually thrust American products into the forefront in most markets, allowed us to rest on our laurels when it came to meeting foreign competition. Now, however, other countries are sharing or taking the lead in technology and innovation in so many important market sectors that we are forced to take the competition seriously. Nevertheless, we have been slow to react to these foreign competitive pressures in productive ways. This is perhaps best illustrated by a brief analysis of the stark differences between the way Americans and, by example, Germans have reacted to the most recent Japanese successes in their respective automobile markets. During the initial shock waves caused by the growing unemployment in our domestic auto industry, the local press usually blamed what it termed a "Japanese Invasion". Public pressure forced government officials into threatening the Japanese with mandatory import guotas if they didn't "voluntarily" cut back on exports to the U.S. American unions responded with bumper stickers

questioning the patriotism of those driving foreign cars, and auto workers assembled in Chicago to symbolically destroy a Japanese car with sledge hammers. One onerous bumper sticker linked the invasion of Japanese autos to the events at Pearl Harbor! West Germany has also had its problems dealing with Japanese success in the auto market, but the reaction there could be described as completely the opposite of that in Michigan. The German press refers not to an "invasion" but to the "Japanese challenge". Already one can see a completely different attitude -- instead of becoming defensive (i.e. passive) and preparing for an "invasion", the Germans are in an offensive (i.e. active) posture preparing to meet a challenge! The Germans do not see a solution to the problem overseas, but rather in their own productivity at home. German Economics Minister Otto Graf Lambsdorf suggested to German workers that they bring their level of productivity up to the Japanese level. The German popular media, in contrast to their Michigan counterparts, deal with in-depth analyses of the "Japanese strategy for success". Characteristic of this approach is a recent huge special section of the German equivalent of Business Week, the Wirtschaftswoche, devoted to Japan. In a special series of articles[9] one finds information from most every facet of Japanese business success, from economic statistics to an analysis of management style. The Germans do not necessarily want to imitate the Japanese, nor can they -- their goal is to understand Japanese business acumen so that they can compete more successfully with the third largest economic power in the world. The German strategy of understanding the Japanese, their culture, and their business success was apparent even in the popular press early in the Japanese incursion into the German auto market (1979). By contrast, Americans are still wrestling with acceptance of Japanese competition and, while a few enlightened multinational corporations, like Caterpillar , have made great strides in the area of under-

standing this major foreign competitor, much of our industry still struggles in 1983 with ways to cope with the Japanese "threat". General Motors and Caterpillar remain two notable exceptions to this trend -- perhaps because both have had long and successful experience in overseas markets. Both GM and Caterpillar have taken the offensive in an effort to meet and exceed Japanese successes in their respective industries and both have done so by visiting Japanese companies, meeting with Japanese executives, studying Japanese management philosophy, adapting certain aspects of that philosophy where it can help American productivity, and, last but not least, joining in joint venture production with the Japanese in the U.S. Such joint ventures create an atmosphere of cooperation in which mutual understanding and respect may be fostered. "We've gained our knowledge about Japanese methods in several ways, but most clearly by working with a major Japanese firm in a joint venture", declared Caterpillar Chairman Lee L. Morgan about the firm's joint operations with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.[10] GM announced plans recently to produce subcompact cars in California through a joint venture with Toyota; this move toward closer cooperation with the Japanese followed closely upon revelations concerning GM's intensive effort to emulate certain Japanese manufacturing techniques.[11] It should be noted, however, that GM's announcement was met with criticism from other parts of the U.S. auto industry, principally from Chrysler Chairman Iococca, who represents that portion of U.S. business which continually retreats to protectionistic devices, in his statement that rather than creating 12,000 new jobs -- as GM predicted -- 50,000 jobs would be lost in the U.S. In answering Mr. Iococca's challenge to international free trade, one would be wise to turn once again to Caterpillar Chairman Morgan:

> It's been suggested by some people that we should urge our

government to legislate import duties so the Japanese tractor will cost more in this country. Such proposals miss a basic point about Caterpillar business. 56.6 percent of our sales d llars were outside the United States last year -- exports of U.S.-made products accounted for two-thirds of that. We exported $3.5 billion worth of products from the United States in 1981, and that volume created about 31,000 jobs in our U.S. facilities. Further, we estimate that our exports were responsible for more than 60,000 jobs for Caterpillar suppliers in the United States.

We must compete throughout the world, and U.S. import dutes will not help us...Import duties lead to trade wars in which everbody loses...violate the basic premise of free enterprise...and completely ignore the realities of international business.[12]

These realities of international business are becoming increasingly important as the United States enters an era in which export trade and foreign investment must be seen as the solution to our balance of trade problem; we can no longer afford to bury our heads in the sand, like the proverbial ostrich.

For the Germans an acceptance of the Japanese challenge comes perhaps more naturally because Gemany is situated in the center of Europe with centuries-old economic ties to its neighbors. It has been forced to learn from other cultures because it has been a traditional crossroads for disparate cultures. America, on the other hand, has enjoyed more than two centuries of relative ecomonic isolation where it depended on no one but itself. It is therefore somewhat difficult for such a self-reliant and relatively wealthy giant to accept the inevitably advancing degree of interdependence with the rest of the

world. Our inability to address ourselves to our changing relationship within the world economy has led to our balance of trade problems.

Success in foreign trade is indicated by the status of the balance of trade figures. The figures for 1980 revealed a general sickness across the board, with balance of trade deficits recorded by 17 or the top 20 richest Western industrial nations; the U.S. was at the bottom of the list with a 32 billion dollar deficit.[13] Only Canada, West Germany, and Norway showed trade surpluses. It could be well worth the effort of American business executives to ask what has contributed to this German export success which produces 1/10 of total world exports -- a prodigious figure for a country the size of the state of Oregon. Indeed, it is Germany's expansive export trade which has helped German businesses withstand an increasigly difficult economic picture at home. In a recent article in Der Spiegel[14](the German equivalent of Time) the factors contributing to foreign trade success were analyzed. The German magazine quotes a survey conducted by a French magazine, in which economic consultants worldwide were asked to rate the competitiveness of the six largest exporting nations in the world. Undisputed leaders in the survey were the Germans -- far ahead of the Japanese, the French, and the Americans. Germans were consistently praised for:

1) punctuality with deliveries
2) customer service
3) seriousness of business dealings
4) quality of products.

Germans came in first in seven of twelve categories.[15] This success in foreign trade comes, in addition, despite the relative expense of German products. West Germany still holds the record, incredibly enough, for total export sales of automobiles. In 1980 they sold 2 million cars and realized 54 billion Marks;

the Japanese sold 6 million cars in the export market and realized 46 billion marks![16] Thus, it is the quality of the products, combined with customer service, which is used to successfully market German products overseas. German products may be more expensive, but customers seem to be willing to pay the extra amount if deliveries arrive on time, if engineering and production quality are beyond reproach, if replacement parts are readily available, and customer service is excellent. It is this reputation which has made West Germany the world's largest exporter of machines and machine tools.

There is nothing mysterious in the German formula for success in international markets, but I hasten to add that the formula is based upon what could be called almost stereotypical positive traits in the "German national character", if one indeed can define such a phenomenon. Japanese success, by the same token, is often attributed to the importance of the concepts of frugality, high quality, growth in productivity, discipline, and work ethic among the Japanese.[17] Thus, where the Germans succeed with high quality, performance and durability oriented, yet highly expensive goods sold in smaller quantities, the Japanese would seem to succeed by capitalizing upon a work and discipline ethic which allows mass production of relatively high quality goods at somewhat lower profit margins. By studying the success of our foreign competitors, Americans can perhaps regain that competitive edge in international markets which we have been slowly losing. In the past, Americans have proven themselves to be adaptive, resilient and energetic and I have no doubt that American business will eventually respond seccessfully to foreign competition in the free-market system we espouse. Our path to seccess, as pointed out by Prof. Erwin Dichtl of the University of Mannheim, may very well be in learning to market our products abroad based upon positive stereotypes[18] of the "American national character" as perceived by the consumer in foreign markets. This will

inevitably lead to a peculiarly American formula for greater success in international markets, much like the Japanese and German formulas above. In doing so we will have to rid ourselves of the negative images which have shaped our involvement abroad to date -- including the "everyone over there speaks English" mentality and the "ugly American" image.

In creating this new positive image upon which the successful expansion of American business interests abroad depends, American firms will need an increasing number of business school graduates with international expertise. The level of expertise required will of necessity be far higher than heretofore in demand; in the past we enjoyed the luxury of requiring that business partners speak our language and do business our way. Americans are awakening to the need to understand foreign cultures; we have entered a period of self-appraisal in the wake of unfortunate errors in our conduct of international affairs which have had the effect of opening our eyes to a gulf between our good intentions, as we perceive them, and the perception of our intentions by other peoples whose cultural experience may be totally alien to our own. Pride in our country's ideals and achievements has often blinded us, so that we have visualized our language and culture as superior to others.

Partly in reaction to such naivete, the Report of the President's Commission of Foreign Language Study, published in 1979, focused attention on the dwindling enrollment in foreign language classes in the U.S. and pointed to American ignorance in areas of foreign language and culture as a national security threat:

> Our gross national inadequacy in foreign language skills has become a serious and growing liability. It is going to be far more difficult for America to survive and compete in a world where nations are increasingly dependent on

one another if we cannot communicate with our neighbors in their own languages and cultural contexts.[19]

The President's Commission also stressed the growing importance of international trade for the U.S. economy by pointing out that

> International trade involves one out of every eight of U.S. manufacturing jobs and one out of every three acres of farmland. American investment abroad totals $300 billion; foreign investment in the U.S. $245 billion. The thirteen largest American banks now derive 50% of their total earning from overseas credits. Six thousand American companies have overseas operations; twenty thousand American concerns export products or services to foreign markets.[20]

In the face of this tremendous international involvement, however, we have been facing ever-dwindling shares in foreign markets and an inability to compete with foreigners in our domestic markets, -- Primarily because our past dominance in trade relations with foreign countries has been reversed within the past decade. We are suddenly faced with stronger foreign currencies, increased business acumen amongst foreign competition, and a new-found sense of pride in the foreigners who now wish to "do things their way" for a change.

Could part of the reason for our balance of trade deficit with Japan possibly be the fact that there are 10,000 English-speaking Japanese business representatives on assignment in the United States, while there are fewer that 900 American conterparts in Japan, only a handful of whom are fluent in Japanese? In light of this fact, one solution to the balance of trade problem suggested by certain congressmen seems almost ludicrous -- "Force those Japanese to drop their restrictive trade barriers -- open that Japanese market to free foreign trade; make their market as open to us as ours is to them!" So goes one

battle cry. But, provided less restrictions did exist in the Japanese market, would we be prepared to compete in it? We have very few trained business people who speak the language fluently and know the culture. Thus, we have almost ignored the Japanese market -- the third largest free market in the world!

If, indeed, American businesses see their future growth coming more from international than domestic operations, much of the challenge for American business should lie in the recruitment of individuals who have the credentials necessary to overcome the serious barriers that confront businesses with little experience or few skills in negotiation with foreign enterprises or governments who possess a new-found pride in their languages, their values, and their way of doing business. The present lack of qualified individuals with such international expertise is apparent from figures reported by Heidrick and Struggles' survey of American business which revealed that 6 out of 10 companies involved in business overseas suffered losses resulting from inability to predict the consequences of unstable political environments in the last five years. The losses resulted from delayed payments, restrictions on profit remittances, nationalization of industries, and poor market strategies.[21] The longstanding unwillingness on the part of Americans to learn foreign languages, supported by the relative geographical isolation of the U.S. and by the position of English as a major world language, must be overcome, the President's Commission reported, if the U.S. is to remain competitive in the world market. This unwillingness to learn about foreign cultures and languages is often viewed by others as arrogance and, if we are to succeed in changing our image abroad for the better, we must reassess our position with respect to foreign languages and cultures -- we must learn to communicate better.

III The Concept and Composition of "Business German" at MSU

Communication has always been the chief concern of foreign language teachers; business communication has simply added one more dimension to that concern. Within that added dimension there are, however, also many levels and types of communication which may be addressed by the foreign langauge educator. Unfortunately, the title "Business German" or "Business French" may lead one to a mental analogy with "Business English", a designation usually reserved for high school or junior college courses dealing with secretarial skills. Thus, "Business German" may be regarded by some as a course in which one learns the rudiments of the German secretarial routine, i.e. handling bilingual correspondence and, perhaps, such duties as processing import/export orders. Such a concept is indeed the basis for some business foreign language courses, and one will usually notice with such a concept an accompanying attempt to use foreign language proficiency as a job skill for liberal arts graduates.[22] As indicated earlier, however, five years of experience with the MSU Program has led me to the conclusion that the training of liberal arts majors as bilingual secrtaries serves neither the best interest of our students themselves, nor the national interest which dictates that we should turn our attentions to the training of bilingual managers who will be in decision making positions. We may indeed find ourselves forced by the exigencies of our own existing foreign langauge enrollments to view the addition of business foreign language as a means to an end -- as a device to increase enrollment; we may even be forced to accept the fact that colleagues may never regard business foreign language as any more than an unwanted stepchild born of the marriage of fad and practicality. But, we must not let such rationale color our own attitude toward what must be an academically demanding foreign language course, which has its

raison d'etre not in serving as a vehicle for further study of the literature per se, but rather in learning to apply those language skills in a practical, non-academic, and highly technical setting. "Business German" does not belong in the same category with "Scientific German" and "German for Travellers", where basic language proficiency certainly is developed as an "ancillary" skill, a term which in its very definition places that skill in a subordinate position, somehow of secondary importance in attaining some higher purpose. In the training of truly bilingual American managers, the course of language instruction must be just as vigorous and regarded with just as much importance as the course of study in the second professional area of expertise being developed by the student. Such a rigorous academic approach to business foreign language will, quite obviously, not attract or retain the largest possible enrollment in the program. One the other hand, students who fare poorly in such a program simply do not have the necessary language capability, the adaptability or dedication that determine success in finding and keeping employment in the international sphere -- therefore, such a student probably should not be encouraged to pursue such a course.

In addressing the needs of both our students and the business community at large, the MSU "German in International Business Communication" program was developed to combine two major goals, i.e. (1) increasing language proficiency while using materials designed to build the student's vocabulary in the important facets of international trade and finance, and (2) familiarizing students with the functioning of business and economics in the Federal Republic of Germany. These two basic goals now define our three-term third year "Business German" sequence, German 331, 332, and 333. This year we have added a fourth year course, 425, for advanced students; in 425 we deal with peculiarities of German business language on a more sophisticated level, while using current

events German magazine articles as the vehicle for discussions of major problems affecting world trade. At this point students are encouraged to learn to write -- for research reports -- in the idiosyncratic technical style of the German business language which they have learned to read with increasing facility.

The two major goals mentioned before are similar in that both contain a hidden dimension of peculiar importance. Turning our attention first to the goal of increasing language skills per se, I have found it necessary to address two very different types of proficiency. Discussions with German executives, both here and abroad, have revealed that the most prized skill for the bilingual manager is the ability to participate spontaneously and fluently in meetings and roundtable discussions in the target language. This oral communicative ability, which naturally presupposes a well-trained ear and excellent listening comprehension skills, is based upon the everyday language and should be taught with great attention to the rhetorical devices necessary to inform, persuade, argue, and obtain information in a highly spontaneous discussion setting. Listening comprehension and conversational German with attention to rhetorical devices, hence, become the primary linguistic focus of German 331 and 332. In this phase of our pursuit of the goals of "Business German", then, the teaching devices vary from the traditional third-year composition and conversation courses only in the business and economic focus of the materials used.

Writing skills and reading comprehension, however, as they pertain to the language of business and economics form a completely separate dimension; here the language the students must master takes on its own peculiar blend of syntactical, grammatical and semantic devices which set it apart from the language characteristics which are normally emphasized at this stage of the student's development. In the case of German written business language, it

becomes apparent that those grammatical and syntactic patterns which are considered most "difficult" for the average student -- and, indeed, are usually left until the end in introductory and intermediate level language courses -- occur so much more frequently in technical language as to present major stumbling blocks in the mastery of technical written German. The "second dimension" includes the use of the passive voice, complex sentence patterns with unusual word order, the extended participial modifier, the quotative subjunctive, and phrasing involving the nominalization of verbs. These devices are not predominant in normal prose, may even, in some instances, be considered "poor style", present pedagogical problems, and, therefore, are often relegated to the back burner where they may simmer until the student is required to handle texts that a German peer would read. This last point merits special attention, as I feel that it is almost self-defeating to use most texts specifically written for language students in pursuing proficiency with technical written German. Most such texts filter and simplify the grammar and syntax to the point that the student receives no practical experience with the technical language of the real world. Genuine texts which German peers would read in a given field should be introduced early in the course and the students should be given the tools to handle such texts The more they deal with them, the more proficient they become. Transferring these skills from passive to active mastery, i.e. in learning to use such skills in writing technical reports, should be postponed until a more advanced level. While I require that students write three "Zusammenfassungen" of unit materials for 331 and 332, and a short research paper for 333, most students are still mastering more basic concepts in their writing proficiency and cannot be expected yet to master such advanced techniques. Writing and reading skills are, however, just as important as listening and speaking skills for the future bilingual manager. He or she must be able to research topics, read current literature in the field of specializa-

tion and write research reports.

Thus, the goal of increasing foreign language proficiency takes on a slightly different manifestation in the "Business German" sequence. The second goal, i.e. providing the student with a broad corpus of knowledge regarding the world of business and economics in the Federal Republic of Germany, has an equally unique aspect to it. At its most superficial level, this goal involves the mastery of a vast body of specialized vocabulary introduced through the basic concepts of business and economics. At MSU I have used parts of a textbook entitled Fachsprache Wirtschaft, published by the Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft in Cologne, primarily because of its unique and rather ingenious method for allowing the student easy mastery of thousands of business and economic terms. Through the use of the so-called loose-leaf textbook system, control over this phase of the learning process is put into the hands of the instructor. Students turn over their textbooks to the instructor at the beginning of the term, thus precluding students from going ahead in the text and using the old method of looking up every new word in a dictionary. The instructor introduces all new vocabulary and concepts in German in the classroom first, drawing as much out of the students as possible. After the new vocabulary has been introduced out of context the student is handed loose-leaf pages from the text which contain graphs, or cartoons or reading passages using the new vocabulary. By the time the student leaves the classroom he may have mastered 25 to 50 new words and some major thematic material without once using Enlish as the vehicle for understanding. The technique makes vocabulary learning -- usually an incredible disincentive in technical language courses -- almost effortless. Armed with the new vocabulary and a basic understanding of the forces at work in a particular area of business or economics, we can then move to a presentation of the system of the

Federal Republic per se. Our topics range from economic geography of the Federal Republic to federal regulation of the banking industry.

Once attention has been focused upon a particular topic, one can direct the class to that "hidden dimension" mentioned earlier as an integral part of this second goal of the "Business German" program. I regard a comparison of business practices and economic concepts in the U.S. with those of the Federal Republic as an extremely important aspect of the course work. By comparing and contrasting the two systems, one can increase the student's awareness of possible areas of business communication problems on a far larger and more important scale than the merely linguistic. There is, however, an analogy to be made between studying the contrastive sounds and structures of two languages to determine probably pedagogical problems in language learning and studying the contrastive structures of business and economic systems to determine those areas which could result in business communication difficulties. Those areas which present the most problems are those which result from the non-overlapping or partial overlapping of areas between the two languages or systems.

For example, since the concept of "worker participation and co-dertermination" (or "Mitbestimmung") -- mandated by law in German firms -- does not exist in the U.S., this concept will present a new and unique problem for American students in understanding the term and its myriad implications. "Mitbestimmung" is, however, an extremely important concept in the Federal Republic; a disregard for this concept could lead to total failure in efforts to conduct business in Germany. With reference to co-determination our systems absolutely do not overlap and students are often incredulous when they encounter the concept of the "democratic factory". Another linguistics phenomenon may also be seen in the area of cross-cultural analysis; here I make an analogy to

the concept of mother-tongue interference, i.e., that because something in the foreign language looks like an "equivalent" in the mother tongue -- whether that something be grammatical, syntactical, or semantic -- the student makes an assumption that the two things are the same. The word "Freund", for example, in German does not have quite the same connotation as the word "friend" in English, yet the culturally naive language learner will use them as equivalents. The same is true of concepts in the business world, the German union system and American union system share only the barest minimum of common elements; the differences far out-weigh the similarities, yet the culturally naive business person will assume similarities that do not exist simply because the concept exists in both societies.

Where our two systems genuinely overlap we can predict few problems; those areas which reveal a partial overlap or no overlap at all will create problems beyond the realm of vocabulary learning and into the cultural context.

Thus, "German in International Business Communication" at MSU entails four intertwined dimensions: A continuation of language learning itself; an acquisition of often highly technical vocabulary which allows the student to function practically in the business world; a development of specialized business communication skills -- both oral and written -- needed to enhance the student's ability to inform and persuade; and an increased perception of potential communication problems which can be brought about by cultural differences.

With regard to the overall needs of the business community, it is this last component of a student's education in business foreign language, which along with basic language proficiency, must be regarded as the most important aspect of a business foreign language curriculum. It is through comparing and contrasting economic systems and business methodologies that the student

becomes most aware of cultural diversity. This awareness makes the student more valuable regardless of the individual foreign language studied, because it sensitizes the student and raises his or her level of consciousness concerning the potential depth of diversity between cultures. As a colleague pointed out recently:

> Business decisions involve many aspects. Legal and financial aspects are, of course, technical, but much of business decision-making involves a cultural context. Will the Germans buy our hardware products? What is an effective management structure for our Belgian Branch? A knowledge of foreign habits, customs, preferences, personality and mentality provides the cultural context in which these decisions are made.[23]

It is this cultural environment of international business which is opened to the foreign language student. It is an area which has been neglected by American business until recently -- it is an area which we as a nation can no longer afford to neglect. The environment -- the cultural context of any society -- is revealed through its language grid and we cannot possibly hope to achieve the levels of international expertise to which we aspire without thorough foundations in the languages of other cultures.

The thorough understanding of the important cultural context surrounding business decisions and the level of language proficiency required by our future bilingual managers cannot, however, be fully attained in the classroom in the United States. What we can do, at best, is prepare students to use their language skills to cope with the cultural diversity they will find; to hone their language skills and fully understand the culture, they must experience it, and, thus, the development of an overseas intership program offer-

ing students the opportunity to work for foreign firms overseas has been an intergral part of my involvement with the "Business German" curriculum at MSU. The "Business German Overseas Internship Program" is now into its fourth year and can boast the rotating participation of some thirty businesses involved in German-American trade. During the past three years twenty-five MSU students have been offered paid internships with German firms overseas (usually during the three month summer vacation) in their chosen speciality fields, ranging from advertising to chemical engineering. Prerequisite for consideration in the internship program is completion of the third-year level sequence with at least a "B" average. The concept behind the preparation of these students began to show its worth in the overwhelmingly positive response to this program from its very inception on the part of the business community and in the fact that fully two-thirds of our previous interns who have since graduated are actually working in their chosen speciality with their German. In addition, they have gained either entry-level positions with far more potential than they would have gotten without the language component, or they have secured positions with major firms which their specialty degree alone would not have afforded them.

On the one hand, the development and maintainence of the "Overseas Internship Program" has involved an incredible mountain of correspondence, much research, and diligence and patience in learning to cope with the plethora of originally unforeseen problems springing from the placement of these undergraduate students in Germany. On the other hand, the rewards have certainly been worth the effort as one sees the business community eagerly recruit these students because of their bilingualism and experience abroad. Such double major graduates, I feel, will become increasingly more valuable to American corporations, which themselves have become more aware in recent years of the

need to regain their competitive edge through more accurate knowledge about foreign competitors and their methodologies. Part of this newly aroused U.S. interest in knowledge concerning other lands and cultures can certainly be traced to the success of foreign manufacturers in the U.S. market, but a large share of the interest is motivated by a need to protect foreign investments. As Louis Kraar recently noted in an article for Fortune magazine, "Over the past decade, American corporations have been discovering one supposedly rich foreign market after another -- only to have their hopes dashed or diminished by unexpected political changes or upheavals."[24] Iran is certainly the most vivid recent example, but multinationals have also recently begun to invest in China without adequately understanding the country. In the wake of a decade of often less-than-enlightened business investment, U.S. corporations are seeking foreign affairs specialists and related professionals who understand foreign languages and cultures to advise them about the probable future for their investments abroad. Once again, Kraar: "Since U.S. corparations face ever fiercer competition abroad, and their own power has been diminished, the leaders of these enterprises have only one choice -- to get smarter about the world".[25]

Notes

[1] Joseph Lurie, "America: Globally Blind, Deaf and Dumb," Foreign Language Annals, 15, No. 6 (1982), p. 417.

[2] International Business and Economic Research Corporation, Imports, Exports and Jobs (New York: American Importers Association, 1978) p. 44.

[3] German American Chamber of Commerce, U.S.-German Trade (New York: German American Chamber of Commerce, [1980]).

[4] President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1979), p. 125.

[5] Imports, Exports and Jobs, p. 33.

[6] Imports, Exports and Jobs, p. 30.

[7] Imports, Exports and Jobs, p. 21.

[8] Heidrick and Struggles, Inc., Profile of a Chief International Officer ([Chicago]: Heidrick and Struggles, Inc., 1980) p. 4.

[9] "Wirtschaftswoche Spezial: Japan," Wirtschaftswoche, 11 July 1980, pp. 81-101.

[10] Lee L. Morgan, The Japanese Challenge in the 1980s (Peoria, Illinois: Caterpillar Tractor Company, 1982), [p. 3].

[11] Paul Lienert, "Kanban," Detroit Free Press, 30 Jan. 1983, Sec. G, p. 1, cols. 2-6.

[12] Morgan, [pp. 8-9.]

[13] "Export-Boom: Kein Land der Erde Bietet mehr," Der Spiegel, No. 51, 1981, p. 49.

[14] Spiegel, p. 38.

[15] Spiegel, p. 47.

[16] Spiegel, p. 47.

[17] Morgan, [pp. 5-8.]

[18] Erwin Dichtl, Ph.D., "Japans kritischer Blick," Wirtschaftswoche, 29 Oct. 1982, p. 76.

[19] President's Commission, p. 28.

[20] Presdient's Commission, p. 125.

[21] Heidrick and Struggles, p. 9.

[22] The most recently published example of such a rationale for business foreign language studies: Kristina Trendota, "International Trade in Commerce with Liberal Arts: One Instructor's Dual Pursuit," ADFL Bulletin, 14, No. 2 (1982), pp. 35-37.

[23] Carson H. Varner, Jr., "Why Study German -- A Business Point of View," Die Unterrichtspraxis, XII, No. 2 (1979), p. 64.

[24] Louis Kraar, "The Multinationals Get Smarter About Political Risks," Fortune, 24 March 1980, p. 86.

[25] Kraar, p. 100.

718

EVERYDAY NEGOTIATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS: BUSINESS LANGUAGE THROUGH THE BACK DOOR

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Everyday Negotions and Transactions, or: "Business Language" Through the Back Door

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What is "business language"? Is it a highly technical language we must teach in specialized courses for those who want to go into business, a language used only by business men and women? Not necessarily. If we look closely at our everyday communications, it becomes apparent that much of our daily lives involves "business", that is, the many routine negotiations and transactions we must know how to handle verbally. This is true in the United States, and it is also true in the other developed, industrialized nations whose languages we are trying to teach. After that there is, of course, the technical vocabulary used specifically in specific branches of business. It's the kind of terminology, almost a code, that is needed as an "add-on" to the much larger business vocabulary every adult- or at least every basically educated adult - is familiar with. Before one gets to the specialized terminology in a foreign language, one needs a solid basis in the general field of everyday negotiations and transactions.

Picture yourself arriving by airplane in Frankfurt, Germany. Someone was to meet you at the airport, but instead, there is a message that you are to call so-and-so who will give you directions on how to get to your hotel by public transportation. How do you use the telephone in Germany? What do you ask? Will you understand the answer? In a foreign country, telephones can turn into frightening instruments, and the easiest task of communication into an ordeal. - Or imagine that you are staying longer in one place so that it would make sense to rent a room or an apartment instead of paying for a hotel room. How does one look for suitable lodgings, and how does one negotiate with rental agents and landlords? And what are the general rules? - Then again, you may need a doctor: how do you make an appointment (sich f.d.Sprechstunde anmelden) without giving the nurse the impression that what you want is a date with him (eine Verabredung)? - Or take the case that you cannot keep an important date or appointment. How do you politely excuse yourself, cancel the meeting (absagen) or postpone it (verschieben), or whatever else might be the appropriate thing to do under the circumstances? (App. 1)

These are only a few of the many daily situations involving transactions and negotiations which require skills in

1. understanding the situation within the context of the foreign culture,
2. comprehending the foreign language when spoken by native speakers,
3. conveying in more than baby-talk your thoughts and wishes.

These situations do not involve a specialized technical vocabulary, but a standard, semi-formal everyday business vocabulary which every adult speaker of the foreign language knows and uses.

Aside from this general vocabulary, some familiarity with habits and customs, and even more with the present political and economic situation of the country is important. Let us say you are meeting a business connection for the first time in Hamburg. He mentions that he is actually from Dresden but was able to relocate with his entire family in Hamburg in 1960, "just in time". Will you understand what was involved, personally and politically, in such a move for him and his family, or will you give him a blank stare because you haven't any idea where that strange-sounding place might be? Together with a mastery of the situational verbal skills mentioned above and a sense of what's polite and what is not, a display of interest in the country and what is going on there at the time can be a cornerstone for good business relations.

These are the premises I started with last year when beginning to integrate "everyday negotiations and transactions"material into existing Conversation and Composition courses on the 200- and 300-level. In sum, they say that the language used in everyday communications includes a great deal of "general business language" which is also the basis for the special technical language used in special branches of business. A speaker's facility with the general level of business language and familiarity with the country's customs and habits and its present-day economic and political situation can make the difference between being perceived as rude or polite, between a sophisticated or clumsy approach to everyday situations encountered in the foreign country, and in the final analysis, between being successful or not in business relations. Teaching such skills within a Humnaities program is perfectly appropriate. Our department had had no luck in trying to get support for the institution of courses in "Business German". Yet we were seeing larger enrollments in intermediate and upper division courses because of the number of Business Majors who wanted to prepare for jobs in banking, export, or with foreign manufacturing companies. As to our German Majors, they are now frequently minoring in Business, and those students who are planning to go into foreign language teaching also are more interested in the

people and their institutions than used to be the case. The modified Conversation and Composition courses I had in mind were definitely Humanities courses in that they were to acknowledge the fact that business is not conducted outside the sphere of human relations in general ; on the other hand, the emphasis was to be on active verbal skills that reflected more than one aspect of present-day realities.

There is at the moment no textbook on the market that is based on exactly these premises or written for these purposes. But quite an array of materials is available that can be "mixed and matched". My own starting point in the design of two specific courses was a little paperback to which I had been introduced by a colleague during a Special Seminar for Teachers of Business German in the summer of 1981 in Köln. This book concentrates on a number of everyday transactions and negotiations of the kind I mentioned before. Designed for instruction in topical letter writing, it contains the necessary vocabulary, many idiomatic expressions, and quite a bit of (hidden) cultural information which the American speaker needs in order to communicate intelligently and with the appropriate politeness. The title is Briefe schreiben - leicht gemacht, and it is published by Hueber in Germany. (App. 2 - Table of Contents.)

The first four chapters deal with more personal situations, such as expressing good wishes, thanks, regrets, condolences; also with finding accommodations, making reservations, registering for school. The vocabulary and sample letters in chapters 5 - 8 deal with job search and application, automobile and other insurance, selling, buying, customer complaints, newspaper ads, and finally, taxes and customs duties - but not on a highly technical level. I have used this book in two ways: (1) the sample letters were the stimulus and starting point for intensive practice in letter writing, and (2) the topics and vocabulary were used as a basis for oral practice. In my first course, the angle from which I approached the practice of oral skills was: People used to write lots of letters - but today we have the telephone! So I began with hand-on instruction in the format and use of a German telephone book. Assignments were mostly in the form of cassette recordings the students were asked to make. They had to invent telephone conversations - by the way, a new and unexpected way to discover the shyest student's wit, charm, and acting talents. The advantage of having the sample letters in the book was that it eliminated guess work and provided the opportunity for structural practice as the written word had to be converted to the spoken idiom and structure. Our goal was to be able to handle each particular Sprech-situation . The result could vary in length and depth from a few brief sentences to an extended conversation. (App. 3 - Examples.) If you are familiar with the test for Zertifikat Deutsch, you will notice the similarity in format of

these verbal tasks. (Incidentally, one of our goals in the design of these courses is to encourage and better prepare our students to earn the Zertifikat.)

My second course is more advanced, and home assignments emphasize writing which is based in large part on the second half of Briefe schreiben - leicht gemacht. In both courses the students work with prepared vocabulary lists. They have to make completions, that is, add gender and plural of nouns, review verb forms, and note down German sentences and expressions in which the use of terms is exemplified. The vocabulary lists are based on my knowledge and expectations of o u r students' proficiency on this course level. Randomly checking them against the vocabulary contained in Fortschritt Deutsch and against the Basic German Dictionary Grammar published by EMC, I found that at least 40% of the common and frequently used words we worked with did not appear in either one of them. (App. 4 - Sample vocabulary lists and sample tests.)

While for this first time around, Briefe schreiben - leicht gemacht served as basic text for both courses, other readings and exercises varied widely. But both courses deal with German geography and economic factors and issues of the day in a conversational manner, using maps and readings to introduce transportation, shifts of industrial centers, and similar factors that can be discussed in comparison with the situation in the United States.

Last but not least: one-third of each course is devoted to the reading and discussion of certain selected works of contemporary German literature which lend themselves well as "bridges" between the two cultures. Again, these are Humanities courses, in which students are to practice and improve their verbal skills in more than one narrowly defined area.

With this kind of Conversation and Composition course I feel that I am auf dem Boden der Wirklichkeit, and my students seem to agree. I think that other books and materials can be used for the same purpose, although I like this little text best for the time being. Looking ahead, I hope that we will eventually be able to augment the course sequence and incorporate the topics contained in Fachsprache Wirtschaft, the Business text created by the Carl Duisburg Centren with which we worked during the Special Seminar for Teachers of Business German.

1. Ich möchte mich bei Dr. X anmelden.

1.a. Sind Sie angemeldet?

Ja, ich bin für 3 Uhr angemeldet.

2.a. Du hast heute abend eine Verabredung mit Herrn C.?

Ja, ich habe mich für halb acht mit ihm verabredet. Wir wollen uns im "Weinstübchen" treffen.

1.b. Ich war für 3 Uhr bei Dr. X. angemeldet, aber ich muß leider absagen. Könnten Sie mich vielleicht morgen irgendwann einschieben?

2.b. Lieber Herr C., wir müssen unsere Verabredung leider auf nächste Woche verschieben! Ich mß heute abend noch nach München, aber am Mittwoch bin ich zurück.

Karin Heintz-Schuppmann, Wolfgang Halm

Briefe schreiben - leicht gemacht

I. Wünsche, Dank, Verabredung, Kondolenz, Telegramme
II. Zimmer, Wohnung
III. Unterricht, Studium
IV. Ferien, Erholung
V. Arbeitsverhältnis, Bewerbung, Lebenslauf
VI. Kraftfahrzeug
VII. Kauf, Verkauf, Reklamation, Verlust
VIII. Steuern, Zoll

Sprechsituation 4

Sie rufen bei einem (Geschäfts)Freund an und hören, daß er nicht zu Hause ist. Stattdessen sprechen Sie mit seiner Schwester(Sekretärin).

Schlüsselwörter und -sätze:

Hier ist ... Kann(Darf) ich bitte Herrn ... sprechen? Ist ... da?

Ach,schade. Die Sache ist ziemlich eilig(wichtig).

Bitte, richten Sie doch Herrn ... (Ihrem Bruder) aus, daß ich angerufen habe.

ihm sagen - er soll anrufen

ich bin (wann) (wo) zu erreichen

wissen vielleicht - wo ... zu erreichen ist?

Könnten Sie (Könntest du) ihm etwas ausrichten?

Oder darf(soll) ich ihn später noch einmal anrufen?

Spielen Sie die Schwester oder die Sekretärin. Fragen Sie, ob Sie ... etwas ausrichten sollen. Vermitteln Sie dem Anrufer den Eindruck, daß Sie ihm helfen werden, den Angerufenen zu erreichen.

Sprechsituation 6

Sie suchen ein Zimmer in einer deutschen Stadt und setzen sich mit einem Makler in Verbindung, der Ihnen dabei helfen soll.

Mustersätze

(Begrüßung, Identifizierung)

Ich suche ein Zimmer(eine Wohnung) in der Nähe der Universität (außerhalb der Stadt,etc.)

Es soll möbliert (kann leer) sein. Ich habe (keine) Möbel.

Was es kosten darf? Nicht mehr als DM ...

Ja, eine Kaution kann ich mir leisten - aber nur bis zu DM ...

Die meisten Vermieter verlangen außerdem noch eine Anzahlung?

In Höhe einer Monatsmiete? Ja, soviel könnte ich vorauszahlen.

Ich brauche ein Zimmer mit Bad
eine eigene Küche
ein Zimmer mit Bad- und Küchenbenutzung

Am liebsten würde ich in einem Studentenheim wohnen.

Könnten Sie mir die Adressen der Münchener Studentenheime angeben?

Variieren Sie, indem Sie statt mit einem Makler mit einem guten Freund sprechen. Mögliche Schlüsselwörter und -phrasen sind:

mit einem Zimmer-Vermittlungsbüro in Verbindung setzen - beim Studentendienst anrufen - um einen Rat bitten - schon auf drei Zeitungsinserate geschrieben, aber nicht das Richtige gefunden - eine Wohnung mit anderen Studenten teilen - Zimmer einer Bekannten wird frei, vielleicht übernehmen?

Erkundigen Sie sich, ob im Studentenheim ein Zimmer frei ist. Falls nicht, bitten Sie darum, daß man sie auf die Warteliste fürs nächste Semester setzt

Sprechsituation 8

Sie müssen Ihre Wohnung(Ihr Zimmer) kündigen und verlangen die Kaution zurück.

Schlüsselwörter und -phrasen:

leider das Zimmer aufgeben, weil . . .

Miete für den Monat . . . auf Konto bei (Bank) überwiesen

Kündigungsfrist also eingehalten

Freund möchte Zimmer übernehmen, wird Kaution erstellen

bitte um Rückerstattung der Kaution

auf mein Konto No. .-. bei (Bank) überweisen,

Zimmer selbstverständlich in einwandfreiem Zustand

wieso Kaution erst in einem Monat zurück? brauche Geld jetzt!

die Hälfte jetzt, die Hälfte in zwei Wochen?

einverstanden

Variieren Sie: Sie sind bereits vor einem Monat ausgezogen, hatten die Miete für den letzten Monat pünktlich bezahlt und die Wohnung in einwandfreiem Zustand verlassen. Ihre Wirtin hat Ihnen die Kaution immer noch nicht zurückgezahlt(oder sie hält einen Teil der Kaution ohne Grund zurück.) Sie haben Sie schon dreimal schriftlich gemahnt. Nun versuchen Sie es per Telefon. Einige mögliche Schlüsselphrasen:

warte immer noch auf Geldüberweisung - Restbetrag noch nicht auf meinem Konto eingegangen - wollte mich erkundigen, was der Grund dafür ist - brauche das Geld dringend - Wohnung nicht in einwandfreiem Zustand vorgefunden? - alles war in bester Ordnung, aber die letzte Telefonrechnung ist noch nicht bezahlt? - bitte jetzt die volle Kaution zurückzahlen - werde Telefonrechnung bezahlen, sobald sie kommt - habe immer pünktlich bezahlt, Sie können sich also auf mich verlassen! - wenn nicht, werde die Sache meinem Rechtsanwalt übergeben

Sprechsituation

Sie sprechen mit einem Berater an der Universität über Ihre finanzielle Situation. Sagen Sie ihm, was Sie wollen und versuchen Sie, ihn davon zu überzeugen, daß Ihr Antrag auf ein Stipendium berechtigt ist.

Schlüsselwörter:

der Unterhalt
die Studiengebühren
die (zusätzliche, doppelte) Belastung
der Antrag, das Gesuch
einen Antrag stellen
die (günstigen, ungünstigen) Arbeitsbedingungen
die (finanzielle) Unterstützung
die Erleichterung
die (schriftliche) Beurteilung, Referenz
das Gutachten
der Bewerber, die Bewerbung
verdienen - sich konzentrieren auf - sich bewerben um - sich bemühen um - gewähren - begründen - es handelt sich um

Variieren Sie die Situation, indem Sie einen Dialog mit Ihrem Berater durchspielen. Ehe der Berater die Entscheidung treffen kann, muß er dem Studenten noch viele Fragen stellen. Was fragt er?

Sprechsituation

Sie haben in der Zeitung ein Stellenangebot gelesen, für das Sie sich interessieren. Da eine Telefonnummer angegeben war, rufen Sie direkt bei der Firma an. Was sagen Sie?

(Guten Tag! Mein Name ist . . . Ich habe Ihre Anzeige in der Frankfurter Allgemeinen gelesen und möchte mich gern um die Stelle als Wirtschaftskorrespondentin bewerben. Ist die Stelle noch frei?)

Sprechsituation

Sie haben eine feste Stellung als zweite Telefonistin und werden zweimal im Monat bezahlt. Eines Tages sagt Ihr Arbeitgeber: "Es tut mir leid, aber wir müssen uns einschränken - das Geschäft geht im Moment gar nicht gut. Ich muß Sie leider entlassen. Freitag ist Ihr letzter Tag." Was sagen Sie?

(Herr X., ich verstehe Ihre Schwierigkeiten - aber wir hatten eine Kündigungsfrist von zwei Wochen vereinbart, und soviel Zeit brauche ich unbedingt, um mir eine andere Stelle zu suchen.)

Sprechsituation

Der Fahrer des anderen Wagens behauptet vor Gericht, Sie seien an dem Unfall schuld. Sie sind aber ganz anderer Meinung. Was sagen Sie?

(Ich bin wirklich nicht schuld. Ich habe alle Verkehrsvorschriften genau beachtet, der andere Fahrer aber nicht! Da er links abbiegen wollte, hätte er sich links einordnen sollen. Stattdessen hat er mich rechts überholt und ist dann links eingebogen!)

S. 7-9

Ver/mieter

Unter/____ zur Untermiete wohnen

Verhältnis

Frohe Weihnachten und ein Glückliches Neues Jahr!

Alles Gute zum Geburtstag! /für die Zukunft!

Gute Besserung!

von Herzen

damit rechnen, daß ...

nachschicken, -senden

es handelt sich um

Brief/bogen /umschlag /marke

verbringen (die Ferien, den Urlaub, die Feiertage)

mitgeben

Fortschritt

(wem?) Mühe machen (sich,dat.)Mühe geben

sich bedanken

aus/packen ein/____

berichten

unmittelbar vor, /... nach

verwöhnen

(was?) einfallen (wem?)

nachträglich

behilflich sein

(was?) versprechen (wem?)

aus diesem Grund aus irgendeinem Grund aus welchem Grund?

rechtzeitig

(wem?) eine Freude machen

erfinden

Ausrede

S. 43-50

erforderlich

entsprechend

(sich) einarbeiten

erfahren ä u a

erweitern

einhalten ä i a

Einzelheit

erwähnen

erfolgen

(sich) eignen geeignet

erteilen (Unterricht)

ernsthaft

erleben Erlebnis

erstaunt Erstaunen staunen

(sich) entschliessen

Empfänger empfangen ä i a

eintreten a e

S.51-56 erkennen Erkennung/s/zeichen

erheblich

Eigentum Eigentümer(in)

(Anzeige) erheben o o

(sich) ereignen Ereignis

einwand/frei einwenden a

ein/drücken

/ordnen (sich)

/biegen o o

eventuell

8. Heute abend kommen Gäste. Wir müssen für Getränke und etwas zu essen

A. kaufen
B. aufpassen
C. sorgen
D. finden

9. Sie müssen Ihren Antrag auf Gebührenermässigung gut

A. begründen
B. stellen
C. beurteilen
D. bewilligen

10. Würden Sie Herrn Schmidt bitte _____, dass ich etwas später kommen werde?

A. entschuldigen
B. sagen
C. ausrichten
D. mitteilen

11. Meine Eltern erlauben mir, ihr Auto zu benutzen; das bedeutet, ich habe ihre

A. Zustimmung
B. Zusage
C. Einverständnis
D. Führerschein

12. Diese Prüfung wird nicht leicht sein. Ich muss mich gut darauf

A. arbeiten
B. antworten
C. lernen
D. vorbereiten

13. Ich habe die Ausleihfrist überschritten, und die Bibliothek hat mir schon eine _____ geschickt.

A. Mahnung
B. Sondertermin
C. Geldstrafe
D. Brief

14. Ich möchte mich _____, zu welchen _____ Sie eine Deutschlandreise für meinen Klub organisieren könnten.

A. fragen
B. Auskunft bitten
C. informieren
D. erkundigen

A. Verbilligung
B. Bedingungen
C. Bezahlungen
D. Zeit

~~15. Während~~

733

Arbeitsverhältnis, Bewerbung, Lebenslauf - I

Welches ist das richtige Wort?

1. Eine Beschäftigung habe ich schon gefunden, aber die _____

   A. Arbeitsstelle
   B. Arbeitserlaubnis
   C. Behörde

   muß ich noch _____.

   A. benötigen
   B. bitten
   C. beantragen

2. Sobald Ihre Aufenthaltserlaubnis _____,

   A. vorliegt
   B. bekommt
   C. beantragt

   können Sie sich eine Wohnung suchen.

3. Wenn Sie Arbeit suchen, _____ Sie sich am besten ans Arbeitsamt.

   A. gehen
   B. bitten
   C. wenden

4. Besonders im Sommer kann das Arbeitsamt Ihnen vielleicht Adressen für Urlaubsvertretungen _____.

   A. suchen
   B. vermitteln
   C. brauchen

5. Eine Halbtagstätigkeit _____ bei mir auch in Frage.

   A. ist
   B. wäre
   C. käme

6. Ich werde mich ____ diese Stelle _____.

   A. für .... bewerben
   B. um ... beworben
   C. um ... bewerben

7. Sie werden gefragt, worin Ihre Arbeit besteht. Beantworten Sie diese Frage in wenigen Sätzen!

9. Ich habe mir gerade ein Auto gekauft und möchte mich deshalb mit Ihnen über den Abschluß ___ unterhalten.

A. einer persönlichen Haftpflichtversicherung
B. einer Krankenversicherung
C. einer Unfallversicherung

10. Wenn Sie den Unfall ____, muß Ihre Versicherung bezahlen.

A. haben
B. verursacht haben
C. erwähnt haben

11. Meine Vorderachse wurde ___, als ich auf den anderen Wagen auffuhr.

A. verletzt
B. beschädigt
C. geschadet

12. Erst nachdem sechs Zeugen gegen ihn ausgesagt hatten, ___ der Fahrer des Sportwagens, daß er zu schnell gefahren war.

A. gab . . . zu
B. behauptete
C. merkte . . . vor

13. Wenn ich das Vorfahrtsschild nicht ___ hätte, wäre der Unfall sicher nicht passiert.

A. gesehen
B. überfahren
C. übersehen

14. Der Fahrer, Herr Bier, war total betrunken und wurde von der Polizei ___.

A. festgenommen
B. festgestellt
C. bestätigt

15. Auf der rechten Fahrbahnspur fuhr ein Wagen, dessen Fahrerin nach links ___ wollte; sie hatte sich aber nicht rechtzeitig eingeordnet.

A. turnen
B. drehen
C. abbiegen

16. Wegen der Höhe des Schadens bat ich einen Rechtsanwalt, mich bei Gericht zu ___.

A. vertreten
B. sehen
C. übernehmen

735

COMPARATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE CLASS

by

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The traditional university is usually viewed as having two main functions: research, the discovery or development of new knowledge, and teaching, the transmission of that new knowledge, and of the accumulated old knowledge of which the university is a repository, to the students. Whether mainly tax- or tuition-supported, it seems reasonable to expect the university to teach its students such knowledge as will enable them upon graduation to become productive, tax-paying citizens who are optimally employed in earning a living.

For some time now, as has become clear from various investigations, most notably that of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies in 1978/79, the foreign language teachers at our nation's universities have not fulfilled that expectation. One of the Commission's most astute criticisms was that "traditional foreign language courses are not relevant to the life goals of students."[1]

For too long, foreign language teachers have been creating intellectual clones of themselves--at the graduate level usually literary specialists of some kind--whose only function, barring a succession of research grants to delve ever more deeply and narrowly, can be to become themselves language or literature teachers in the protective environment of academia. It is, I submit, the eleventh hour for us to change our course offerings, in order to help equip our students to survive in the real world, specifically, the world of business.

Business: make - sell - buy - consume - replace - service - that is the heartbeat of America, and that is where most of the tax revenues and endowments that support our great public institutions of higher learning are generated. Thus, our shared obligation as language, and specifically German, teachers also extends to the business community which rightly expects, in return for its contribution, to be able to draw on a pool of well-prepared graduates to fill its needs for entry-level international business managers. The students must be prepared to "fit in" and function effectively in these positions, whether as expatriate managers of American firms with operations in Germany, or as managers for German-owned American subsidiaries.

"But wait," you may say, "isn't that the function of our business schools, the great MBA factories? Surely, we can neither encroach upon their province, nor are we trained to do so." You are right on both counts. Although the B-schools have apparently not fulfilled their obligation any better than we have ours, as pointed out in a recent Business Week article[2] (and as reflected in the fact that, although the number of MBA's has risen from 4,643 in 1960 to over 54,000 in 1981,[3] multinational corporations now hire fewer MBA's[4]), we cannot do their work for them. But we can supplement and reinforce it. We cannot,nor should we, teach theory and principles of management, but everything else is fair game: the "current events" of international business, case studies, and the cultural and legal facts that shed light on these phenomena.

We teach language and language transports content. We must change that content from a primarily literary to a business orientation.

To do this, we need to cooperate with the B-schools, and that may, in many cases, be tough going. The Business Week article referred to above, points out that the most entrenched and prestigious B-schools, such as Harvard and Chicago, apparently see no need for change. (Harvard even offers two very expensive eight-week seminars a year at their Swiss branch school on Lake Geneva, to teach Europeans that the American management techniques are unequivocally the best--in English, of course.)[5] Others, Wharton for example, are trying to move with the market and might be more interested in interacting with foreign language departments. Wharton now has a joint MBA/MIR (Master of International Relations) and offers some internationally oriented courses. One of these, a laudable example, deals with customizing advertising campaigns to the needs and cultural characteristics of individual international markets.[6] Despite such encouraging signs of recognition by some B-schools that the international aspects of business must be addressed, still conspicuously absent is any attempt on their part to encourage their graduates to be bilingual, a skill taken for granted by Europeans.[7]

We language teachers have always known that language is the major conductor of cultural sensitivity, a quality sorely needed by the international manager, but at the B-schools they still believe that that quality is inherent in an individual or not, and cannot be taught.[8]

The good teacher has, of course, always consciously developed cultural sensitivity in the students while teaching them the forms and usage of German or any other foreign language. The study of business German can yield similar insights into the cultural factors that help determine German management practices.

Take, for instance, the fact that in German companies the status gap between production workers and managers is linguistically minimized, in that all employes, from the president to the floor sweeper are referred to as Mitarbeiter, "co-workers," a social phenomenon, from which, in combination with other such phenomena, the student may correctly draw the conslusion that there is much more personal contact and greater interdependence between labor and management, and that the dignity and well-being of even the lowliest employe is the object of much greater respect and thoughtfulness on the part of management than here in the U.S. This is a cultural fact which is one of the causes of the radically different hiring and firing practices in the two countries, and it has been the basis for the enactment of a profusion of protective labor laws in the FRG. Besides being ethically unthinkable, it would also be illegal to pay a worker on Friday night and tell him not to come back on Monday morning--a common practice here.

Or take, for another example, the greater admiration, even reverence, a German has for a well-designed,well-made machine. This is reflected linguistically in the fact that, whereas the American simply "operates" the machine, that is, makes it work, the German uses the verb bedienen, to "serve" the machine.

In alerting the students to notice such linguistic differences and encouraging them to interpret these differences--a process which in the highly motivated students soon becomes automatic--we help them to become culturally sensitized and thus enable them to communicate and deal far more effectively with their German business partners.

If the B-schools see no need for such training, the multinational corporations certainly do. In 1979, my German colleagues and I at the American Graduate School of International Management conducted a nation-wide survey of 105 American subsidiaries of German firms (about 10% of all German firms in the U.S. at that time), employing approximately 200,000 people. We found that 87% of our respondents considered a knowledge of the German language, culture, and business practices a favorable factor when selecting upper-level management personnel. 42% of these firms were willing to pay extra for such skills.[9] An informal study of German firms in Georgia by the Goethe Institute and the German/American Chamber of Commerce in Atlanta yielded similar results. The nine representative responses by German managers which were published in the Institute's booklet, stressed the need for such skills in their second-tier management personnel, in order to enable them to communicate effectively with the parent company in Germany.[10]

The rare language program presently in existence that does fill this need is often located far from the plant, so that these American subsidiaries have, in many cases, instituted their own in-house programs. The Bayer-owned Cutter Laboratories in Berkeley, California, for example, have had such a program since 1976. The

stated purpose of the program is to teach the students language skills, enable them to understand the motives and characteristics of the head office in Germany, and to counteract local distrust and dislike toward the German interloper who has acquired an American firm. Participants in the program are given preferential consideration for assignments to the company's headquarters in Germany.[11] Needless to say, these companies are not in the teaching business and would much rather send their employes to a good adult education program at a nearby school or university.

The students themselves are certainly supportive of foreign language study with international business content. The Academy of International Business recently published A Global Survey of International Business Curricula. Of the 300 U.S. business schools responding, only 47 offered a master's degree in International Business. These 47 had a total of 1270 students specializing in that degree program.[12] 925 of these students, or almost three quarters, were attending the American Graduate School of International Management, where the language program is specifically designed to meet their needs as future international managers. AGSIM is a small graduate school. Our total student body numbers between 900 and 1,000. Yet, every semester, we turn away hundreds of applicants for admission who are attracted mainly by the language program. Eight languages are offered, language study is mandatory, and classes are small. 97% of students, responding to a recent campus survey endorsed the language program enthusiastically.[13]

The "multis" are equally enthusiastic. Despite the lingering recession and our small pool of graduating students, 180 major multinational corporations came to our campus to recruit in 1981/82.[14] These companies, too often hurt in their foreign operations by chauvinistic, insensitive managers who not only create ill-will, but cost their employers dearly in lost profits and faulty decisions based on faulty communication,know that a program like ours is to their benefit. They and the students realize that knowledge of the language and cultural sensitivity are ancillary rather than primary qualifications, but such skills give these young men and women who want to become international business managers the competitive edge that makes them so highly desirable to employers.

Another good reason--all protestations of unselfish dedication to the contrary--for orienting our programs towards business and thus attracting more students, is the perfectly valid desire for self-preservation of the foreign language departments, many of whom are on the brink of extinction. German departments are no exception. Much as we might like to idealize our mission, the unnerving slide in enrollments will continue unless and until students see that studying German will be translatable into increased opportunities and earnings in the real world. Thus, to make our programs more relevant is to the benefit of all concerned: the student, the business community, our schools, departments, and ourselves individually.

What are some of the problems of implementation? As mentioned above, we must try to influence the international departments of our business schools to cooperate with us and engage in "matrix teaching" on the lines of the matrix management practised by many German firms, where co-equals from various areas, say, production and marketing, cooperate in decision-making, thereby removing departmental barriers that tend to reduce innovativeness and productivity. We should go all out to make the B-schools see that a total package, which includes language training and cultural sensitization would be more attractive to the students of both desciplines.

Such alliances will also help us overcome another and major problem: our own lack of expertise in the intricacies of international management. Our B-school colleagues can help us to fill this gap and to prepare ourselves for our new role. Undeterred by the temporary prejudices of our more moribund colleagues against a business-oriented language program, we should take at least one or two basic economics courses, and, if possible, a course or two in accounting or marketing, and then do what we have always done: read, read, read! Magazines and newspapers, such as Der Spiegel, Die Zeit, and Capital, yield many interesting and informative articles that are helpful in enlarging one's esoteric business and current events vocabulary. (it is somewhat of a minor thrill, for example, when one discovers--and remembers--that the term "cruise missile" is Marschflugkörper in German.)

Incidentally, these publications also make excellent instructional materials for the more advanced students. Since there are very few usable German language texts with business orientation on the market, we may have to write some materials ourselves, again consulting closely with our counterparts among the business faculty, in order to avoid encroachment, duplication, and the transmission of conflicting information. Another good and often readily available resource are speakers from the German business community around us. They are usually willing and eager to help.

What about curriculum? The structure that most readily suggests itself and which we have found useful, goes something like this: The first third of a given core program is devoted to content which is needed to deal with all reasonably foreseeable situations in everyday encounters within the target society. The second third focuses, in its early stages, on major historical events and cultural achievements; then,for its greater part, on recent historical and current events, major achievements in science and technology, the major social and cultural institutions and the laws and regulations governing them. In the last third of the core program, the content is almost exclusively business-oriented. Beyond any required core program, there should be courses offered, which specialize in German business writing and documentation, and such special-topic seminars as banking, advertising, and marketing terminology, etc. These narrower special topics could conceivably be team-taught, two or three segments to a semester.

In conclusion then, let us take note once again that the Global Village is upon us. It behooves us to prepare our students to live in it, whether their interaction with other societies be as international business managers, diplomats (since politics and business are inextricably linked these days), government negotiators in the ever-intensifying trade disputes among nations, or simply as tourists or students.

In our favor is the world-wide trend towards letting computers and robots do what used to be called "work," and allowing humans to spend more time communicating, to achieve the kind of teamwork exemplified by William Ouchi's "Theory-Z,"[15] now widely practised in Japan and West Germany, as well as here in the U.S. The quantity and quality of that communication is at the core of the modern management revolution, and we as German teachers, have the unique opportunity and obligation to help prepare our students for this "Brave New World."

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NOTES

[1] M. Inman, "Foreign Language and the U.S. Multinational Corporation," Background Papers and Studies, The President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies (Washington, D.C.: GPO 1979), pp. 247-310.

[2] "What are they teaching in the B-schools?" Business Week, 10 Nov. 1980, pp. 61-64.

[3] O. Friedrich, "The Money Chase: What Business Schools Are Doing to Us," Time, 4 May 1981, pp. 58-69.

[4] Tom Bean, "Advantages of MIM Degree Illustrated," Das Tor [Student newspaper of the American Graduate School of International Management], 10 Oct. 1980, p. 4.

[5] Kai D. Eichstädt, "Schweizer Garde," Capital, Feb. 1982, pp. 127-30.

[6] "What are they teaching . . .," p. 64.

[7] ibid.

[8] ibid.

[9] Christa Britt, Helmut Roessler, Lilith Schuette, and Elisabeth Zeiner, "German Firms in the United States: A Survey of Managerial and Professional Opportunities and the Matter of Language Competency," ADFL Bulletin, May, 1980, pp. 38-40.

[10] Goethe Institute Atlanta, German in Georgia: German Language Skills and Career Opportunities, (Atlanta, Ga.: 1981), pp. 6-16.

[11] Wilhelm F. Schaeffler, "Deutsche Investitionen in den U.S.A. - Deutsch als Fremdsprache für Amerikaner," lecture at the annual conference of the Western Association for German Studies, Stanford, Ca., 13 Oct. 1979.

[12] R. Grosse and G.W. Perritt, International Business Curricula: A Global Survey (Academy of International Business, 1980).

[13] M.A. Jirasek, "Student Background and Attitudes Towards Learning and Speaking Foreign Languages," Survey of the students at the American Graduate School of International Management, fall, 1982.

[14] American Graduate School of International Management, 1982 Graduate Placement Report (Glendale: 1982).

[15] William Ouchi, Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1981).

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